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Aircraft accessory monitor



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Methods and apparatus are provided for monitoring an aircraft accessory. The processor associated with said aircraft accessory, a transducer coupled to said produce parametric data relating to said aircraft accessory and a memory coup having baseline parametric data residing therein, wherein said baseline parametric data obtained during an acceptance test procedure. The method cor transducer configured to produce parametric data relating to said aircraft acces transducer to a processor associated with said aircraft accessory, coupling said associated with said aircraft accessory, recording baseline parametric data rela accessory in said memory during an acceptance test procedure for said aircraft BELOW TO READ THE REST OF THE PATENT...)



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Inventors: David M. Eschborn, Paul S. Evans, Casey Hanlon, Calvin C. Potte Farnsworth, Louie T. Gaines, David M. Mathis

Class: 701029000 (USPTO), G06F007/00 (Intl Class)

Brief Patent Description - Full Patent Description - Patent Application Claim

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention generally relates to aircraft maintenance, and more specifically to real-time monitoring of aircraft engine accessories to predict maintenance and

BACKGROUND

[0002] Substantial costs can be incurred by aircraft owners and operators due to engine unavailability, or down-time. Aircraft down-time is sometimes related to aircraft engine down-time. The aircraft engine system includes the engine and engine accessories, such as a generator. To reduce the likelihood and/or frequency of costs and downtime, various programs have been implemented.

[0003] Preventive maintenance is periodically performed on aircraft engine accessories based on average wear rates, lubricant usage rates, and similar averages. Variable burdens on engine components due to loads, weather, and various other factors inevitably mean that some engine parts wear at differential rates than others. Worn parts can lead to aircraft down-time.

[0004] In addition to maintenance, logistical support for aircraft engines, such as the distribution of spare parts and lubricants, can also impact downtime. Unavailability of spare parts and lubricants can extend down-time.

[0005] Some mathematical methods for predicting maintenance and logistical support are known in the art. However, these methods require data regarding wear and consumption that is not forensically known, either after expensive operational failures or expensive testing.

[0006] Some methods of gathering useful data are known, but are conventional and limited to test facility use. Some real-time data gathering methods are also known, such as oil temperature, and shaft speed. However, systems for real-time data collection, analysis and real-time prediction of maintenance and logistical requirements have not been developed.

[0007] Accordingly, it is desirable to minimize aircraft accessory downtime. It is also desirable to predict preventive maintenance requirements and logistical requirements to minimize aircraft accessory downtime. Furthermore, other desirable features and characteristics of the present invention are described from the subsequent detailed description and the appended claims, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings and the foregoing technical field and background.

BRIEF SUMMARY

[0008] An apparatus is provided for monitoring an aircraft accessory. The apparatus includes a processor associated with said aircraft accessory, a transducer coupled to said aircraft accessory to produce parametric data relating to said aircraft accessory and a memory coupled to the processor having baseline parametric data residing therein, wherein said baseline parametric data is obtained during an acceptance test procedure;

[0009] A method is provided for monitoring an aircraft accessory. The method includes providing a memory coupled to a processor coupled to sensors adapted to gather data relating to the aircraft accessory, baseline parametric data produced by the processor from the data gathered by the sensors during operation of the aircraft accessory while undergoing an acceptance test procedure, comparing, in the processor and during operation of the aircraft accessory, operational parametric data produced by the coupled processor from the data gathered by the sensors with the baseline parametric data.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] The present invention will hereinafter be described in conjunction with figures, wherein like numerals denote like elements, and

[0011] FIG. 1 is a diagram of an exemplary apparatus for monitoring an aircraft

[0012] FIG. 2A is a partial block diagram of an exemplary method for monitoring

[0013] FIG. 2B is a partial block diagram of the exemplary method of for monitoring an aircraft accessory of FIG. 2A;

[0014] FIG. 3 is a process flow diagram for an exemplary characterization mode of an apparatus for monitoring an aircraft accessory;

[0015] FIG. 4 is a process flow diagram for an exemplary monitoring mode of an apparatus for monitoring an aircraft accessory; and

[0016] FIG. 5 is a graph of a parameter versus time for superimposing actual and

[0017] FIG. 6 is a block diagram of an avionics system adapted to monitor a plurality of aircraft accessories.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0018] The following detailed description is merely exemplary in nature and is not intended to limit the invention or the application and uses of the invention. Although described as an aircraft engine turbine starter (ATS), the present invention also applies to various other aircraft accessories without limitation, starters, auxiliary power units, valves, hydraulic pumps, and the like. Aircraft accessories support the operation of various aircraft systems including engine systems, reverser systems. Furthermore, there is no intention to be bound by any expression used in the preceding technical field, background, brief summary or the foregoing description.

[0019] Turning now to the description, FIG. 1 depicts a simplified block diagram of an aircraft accessory monitor 230 configured to monitor an exemplary aircraft accessory, such as an air turbine starter 206. The air turbine starter 206 is adapted to receive compressed air from a compressed air source 202. The compressed air 205 is supplied to the turbine 206, which is mounted rotationally in the air turbine starter 206. The pressure of the compressed air is sensed by a pressure sensor 203, which is coupled to a monitor data interface 232 of the aircraft accessory monitor 230 by a communications channel 220. One or more parameters associated with the air turbine starter 206, such as, for example, strain forces on selected vanes, rotational speed, or rotational position, are monitored. In the depicted embodiment, the rotational speed of the turbine vanes 211, such as, for example, a tachometer, which is coupled to the monitor data interface 232 over communications channel 222. Various other parameters associated with the air turbine starter 206 are monitored. For example, oil temperature is sensed by sensor 213 and communicated to the monitor data interface 232 over communications channel 224. Oil pressure is sensed by sensor 215 and communicated to the monitor data interface 232 over communications channel 226. In some embodiments, detectors may be employed to detect a larger than normal amount of metallic particles in the oil. Conductivity sensors may be used to determine oil viscosity. Moreover, as is generally known, the aircraft engine starter 206 is a shaft 209 exerting a torque on a load 212,

engine (not illustrated). Thus, the shaft rotation may additionally be parameter deflection, vibration, and torsion, to name a few examples. In the depicted embodiment 210 senses torque and communicates the sensed torque data to the monitor data communications channel 228. The selected sensors and parameters and the number of sensors are exemplary and are not intended to limit the present invention. The communications channels 224, 226, and 228 conventionally use wired connections but may be wireless connections in other embodiments. While the aircraft accessory monitor 230 is depicted as discrete from the aircraft engine accessory 206, the memory 234, the processor 236, or any combination thereof may be at least partially integrated with the aircraft engine accessory 206. In an alternate embodiment, one monitor may monitor two or more aircraft engine accessories having associated sensors.

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Method and system for providing assistance to vehicles with damaged wheel

Industry Class:

Data processing: vehicles, navigation, and relative location

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Thrust vector actuation control system method



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A thrust vector actuation control system and method is configured to allow self actuation system and/or its individual system components. The control system continuous monitoring of actuation system status, and allows system gain and to be changed during vehicle operation remote from its launch site. (SCROLL REST OF THE PATENT...)



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Class: 244052000 (USPTO), B64C015/00 (Intl Class)

Brief Patent Description - [Full Patent Description](#) - [Patent Application Claim](#)

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention relates to an actuation control system and method for a thrust vector actuation control system and method for waterborne and airborne.

BACKGROUND

[0002] The attitude of various types of vehicles, including both waterborne and land vehicles, may be controlled using various control surfaces and/or exhaust nozzles or jet vanes. In some vehicles, control along the roll axis may be implemented using one or more control surfaces, and control along the pitch and yaw axes of the vehicle may be implemented using the exhaust nozzles. In other vehicles, control along the roll, pitch, and yaw axes may be implemented using control surfaces. In some cases, a thrust vector control system may be included to implement control of the attitude of the vehicle.

[0003] In general, when thrust vector control is implemented in a vehicle, the attitude of the vehicle is controlled by one or more vehicle engines or engine exhaust nozzles. More specifically, one or more engine exhaust nozzles is preferably controlled to control the direction of the engine exhaust. To implement this control, the engine exhaust nozzles may be configured to have at least two degrees of freedom, one associated with the vehicle pitch axis and the other associated with the vehicle yaw axis. One or more actuators may be provided to move each nozzle to thereby supply appropriate pitch, yaw, and/or roll attitude control.

[0004] The vehicle may additionally include a thrust vector actuator control circuit that controls the operation of the nozzle actuators, and thus the engine exhaust nozzles. The control circuit may receive commands from an onboard flight computer or a remote station, and in turn supply actuation control signals to the nozzle actuators, to thereby effectuate the commanded attitude change. Presently, most of the thrust vector actuator control circuits installed in vehicles are implemented as analog circuits.

[0005] Although the thrust vector actuation control circuits presently used are generally reliable and robustly designed, the circuits do suffer certain drawbacks. For example, the circuits may not be configured to allow self-testing of the actuation system and/or individual system components. Additionally, the control circuits may not allow real-time, continuous communication of actuation system status to a remote station. Furthermore, the control circuits may not allow system gains and compensation parameters to be changed during vehicle operation remote from the launch site. Moreover, because the control circuits are presently implemented using analog technology, numerous components may be used, which can impact system reliability and overall cost.

[0006] Hence, there is a need for a thrust vector actuation system control circuit that addresses one or more of the above-noted drawbacks. Namely, a control circuit that allows self-testing of the thrust vector actuation system and/or its individual system components, and/or a control circuit that allows real-time, continuous monitoring of at least actuation system status, and/or a control circuit that allows system gain and compensation parameters to be changed during vehicle operation remote from the launch site, and/or a control circuit with increased reliability, reduced weight, and/or reduced cost compared to present control circuits. The present invention addresses one or more of these needs.

SUMMARY

[0007] The present invention provides a thrust reverser actuation control system that includes a controller and one or more actuators. The controller is configured to perform self-testing of the thrust vector actuation system and/or its individual system components, and to allow real-time, continuous monitoring of actuation system status, and allows system gain and compensation parameters to be changed during vehicle operation remote from its launch site. In one embodiment, and by way of example only, a thrust vector actuation control system for a vehicle with more than one engine exhaust nozzle includes a controller and one or more actuators. The controller receives data representative of actuation control system status, and one or more commands from a flight computer. The controller is configured to transmit at least one status data to the flight computer and, in response to the nozzle position data, to control the actuators to move the engine exhaust nozzles to the desired attitude.

or more nozzle actuator control signals. The actuators are adapted to receive the signals and are configured, in response thereto, to move one or more engine exhaust nozzles to the commanded position.

[0008] In another exemplary embodiment, a thrust vector actuation control system for one or more engine exhaust nozzles includes a controller and one or more actuators. The controller is configured to implement a control law, and is adapted to receive data representative of updated control law variables and one or more nozzle position commands from a flight computer. The controller is further configured to modify the implemented control law to include the updated control law variables and, in response to the nozzle position commands, to supply one or more nozzle actuator control signals. The actuators are adapted to receive the nozzle actuator control signals and are configured, in response thereto, to move one or more engine exhaust nozzles to the commanded position.

[0009] In yet another exemplary embodiment, a propulsion vehicle includes an engine, a controller, and an actuator. The engine includes a movable exhaust nozzle. The controller is adapted to receive data representative of updated control law variables and attitude data from a flight computer. The flight computer is operable to transmit the updated control law variables and, in response thereto, to supply exhaust nozzle position commands. The controller is configured to implement a control law, and is adapted to receive the updated control law variables and the attitude data. The controller is to modify the implemented control law to include the updated control law variables and, in response to the nozzle position commands, to supply one or more nozzle actuator control signals. The actuator is coupled to the engine exhaust nozzle, and is adapted to receive the nozzle actuator control signals. The actuator is configured, in response to the nozzle actuator control signals, to move the exhaust nozzle to the commanded position.

[0010] In yet still another exemplary embodiment, a method of operating a thrust vector actuation system includes determining whether to operate the thrust vector actuation system in a normal mode and a monitor mode. If it is determined that the system should operate in the monitor mode, at least writable access is provided to one or more parameters of a control algorithm. If it is determined that one or more parameters may be updated, the control algorithm is updated to include the updated parameters that were updated.

[0011] Other independent features and advantages of the preferred thrust vector actuation system and method will become apparent from the following detailed description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings which illustrate, by way of example, the principles of the invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] FIG. 1 is a simplified side elevation view of a rocket that may include the thrust vector actuation system of the present invention;

[0013] FIG. 2 is a simplified schematic representation of a thrust vector actuation system in an exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

[0014] FIG. 3 is a functional block diagram of an exemplary embodiment of the thrust vector actuation system control circuit that may be used in the rocket and system of FIGS. 1 and 2;

[0015] FIG. 4 is a flowchart depicting an exemplary methodology that may be used in the thrust vector actuation control circuit of FIG. 3.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0016] Before proceeding with a detailed description, it is to be appreciated the embodiment is not limited to use in conjunction with a particular type of engine vehicle. Thus, although the present embodiment is, for convenience of explanation, described as being implemented in a multi-stage rocket, it will be appreciated in various other types of vehicles, and in various other systems and environments.

[0017] Turning now to the description, and with reference first to FIG. 1, a side view of an exemplary multi-stage rocket 100 is shown. The rocket 100 includes a main body 102 divided into multiple stages. In the depicted embodiment, the main body 102 is divided into a first stage 104, a second stage 106, and a third stage 108. It will be appreciated that the rocket 100 could be implemented with more or less than this number of stages. As is shown, the first stage 104 is used during take-off of the rocket. After a predetermined amount of time or more predetermined events, the first stage 104 separates from the main body 102. The second stage 106 is used to fly the rocket 100. Thereafter, and once again after a predetermined amount of time and/or one or more predetermined events, the second stage 106 separates from the main body 102. The third stage 108 is then used to fly the rocket 100.

[0018] Each stage 104-108 includes one or more non-illustrated engines, which may be of numerous types of engines, but are preferably solid rocket propellant engines. In the depicted embodiment, the type of engine that is used, the engine exhausts through a plurality of exhaust nozzles 110, which are preferably spaced equidistantly about a rear wall of each stage 104-108. It will be appreciated that, although only the exhaust nozzles associated with the first stage 104 are illustrated, it will be appreciated that, although four exhaust nozzles 110 are shown, more or less than four exhaust nozzles 110 could be used in any, or all, of the stages 104-108.

[0019] The nozzles 110 in each stage 104-108 are each movably mounted with respect to the stage 104-108, and are moved to a desired position by one or more actuators (not shown). In the depicted embodiment, the nozzles 110 are each configured to move with at least one degree of freedom to thereby provide pitch and yaw attitude control to the rocket 100. Thus, as will be described below, each nozzle 110 includes a pitch actuator and a yaw actuator. It will be appreciated that the nozzles 110 could be configured to move with only a single degree of freedom, or two degrees of freedom. Thus, the rocket 100 may also include more or less than four nozzles 110. The actuators associated with each nozzle 110 may be any one of a variety of actuators. However, in the depicted embodiment, the actuators are each electrically controlled and are controlled using a blowdown hydraulic actuator control system. A simplified representation of an exemplary embodiment of a thrust vector actuation control system using a blowdown hydraulic system is shown in FIG. 2, and will now be briefly described.

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Full patent description for Thrust vector actuation control system and method

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Method and apparatus for supporting aircraft components, including actuators

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Engine mounting structure under an aircraft wing

Industry Class:

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Aircraft accessory monitor

申请号: 677567

Series Code: 10

申请日: 2003-10-01

文摘

Methods and apparatus are provided for monitoring an aircraft accessory. The apparatus comprises a processor associated with said aircraft accessory, a transducer coupled to said processor and operable to produce parametric data relating to said aircraft accessory, and a memory coupled to said processor having baseline parametric data residing therein wherein said baseline parametric data comprises the parametric data obtained during an acceptance test procedure. The method comprises installing a transducer configured to produce parametric data relating to said aircraft accessory, coupling said transducer to said processor associated with said aircraft accessory, coupling said processor to a memory associated with said aircraft accessory, recording baseline parametric data relating to said aircraft accessory in said memory during an acceptance test procedure for said aircraft accessory.

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1994 25p

Languages: English

Journal Announcement: GRAI9601; STAR3312

In Embry-Riddle Aeronautical Univ., Daytona Beach, Fl, Human Factors Certification of Advanced Aviation Technologies p 321-345.

NTIS Prices: (Order as N95-34764, PC A17/MF A04)

... nature of the pilot's role on the flight deck. Pilots have become supervisors who monitor aircraft systems in usual situations and intervene only when unanticipated events occur. Instead of 'hand flying' the airplane, pilots contribute to the control of aircraft by acting as mediators, instructions given to the automation. By eliminating the need for manually...

... the pilots; (3) the bad quality of feed-back from the control systems displays and interfaces to the pilots; and (4) the fact that the automation currently has no explicit representation...

...certification has among its major goals to guarantee the passengers' and pilots' safety and the airplane integrity under normal and abnormal operational conditions, the authors suggest it would be particularly fruitful...

8/3,KWIC/2 (Item 1 from file: 8)
DIALOG(R)File 8:EI Compendex(R)
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06116676 E.I. No: EIP02357063038

Title: A novel power quality monitor for commercial airplanes

Author: Burns, Daniel J.; Cluff, Kevin D.; Karimi, Kamiar; Hrehov, Daniel W.

Conference Title: 19th IEEE Instrumentation and Measurement Technology Conference

Conference Location: Anchorage, AK, United States Conference Date: 20020521-20020523

E.I. Conference No.: 59420

Source: Conference Record - IEEE Instrumentation and Measurement Technology Conference v 2 2002. p 1649-1653 (IEEE cat n 00ch37276)

Publication Year: 2002

CODEN: CRIIE7

Language: English

...Abstract: is to better understand the power quality of the electrical systems at all electrical systems interfaces, which allows suppliers of electrical equipment such as avionics produce more robust, higher reliability, and lower cost equipment. This also aids in the definition of future airplane design requirements. This paper describes the development of the Aircraft Environment Monitor - Power Quality

(AEM-PQ), including its monitoring algorithm, hardware and sensing scheme. Additionally, results from...

Identifiers: Power quality monitor; Commercial airplanes; Line replaceable unit; Aircraft environment monitor

8/3,KWIC/3 (Item 2 from file: 8)

DIALOG(R)File 8:Ei Compendex(R)

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03640096 E.I. No: EIP91110357370

Title: Designed Experiments and Statistical Process Control for automatic fastener installations

Author: Rose, Donald E.

Corporate Source: Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, Wichita, KS, USA

Source: SAE (Society of Automotive Engineers) Transactions v 99 n Sect 1 1990. p 2321-2359

Publication Year: 1990

CODEN: SAETA5 ISSN: 0096-736X

Language: English

...Abstract: protrusion. This has mainly come about from the increasing requests by our customers for unpainted aircraft over the past few years. Unpainted skins require the highest skin quality parameters. Boeing Commercial Airplane Group in Wichita set out to make the application of Designed Experiments to discover the...

...of CE rivets. Once this was completed, a Statistical Process Control method was developed to monitor and control the critical factors affecting rivet protrusion. This paper presents the development of the Designed Experiment and the Statistical Process Control (SPC) method that includes the interface with rivet vendors. This study centers strongly on the blending of operator experience with the...

8/3,KWIC/4 (Item 1 from file: 95)

DIALOG(R)File 95:TEME-Technology & Management

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01053768 I96129901223

Virtually conquering fear of flying

(Die virtuelle Eroberungsangst beim Fliegen)

Hodges, LF; Watson, BA; Kessler, GD; Rothbaum, BO; Opdyke, D

Georgia Tech. Res. Inst., Georgia Inst. of Technol., Atlanta, GA, USA

IEEE Computer Graphics and Applications, v16, n6, pp42-49, 1996

Document type: journal article Language: English

Record type: Abstract

ISSN: 0272-1716

ABSTRACT:

...of heights). To extend VR exposure to fear of flying, the authors designed a virtual airplane that the participant experiences by wearing a head-mounted display with stereo earphones. The participant receives both visual and auditory cues of actually being on an aircraft. The therapist can see and hear what the patient is experiencing on a TV monitor. There are several potential advantages in using virtual reality exposure as compared to in vivo...

DESCRIPTORS: AEROPLANES; AIRBORNE ELECTRONICS; HUMAN BEHAVIOUR; VIRTUAL MACHINES; APPROXIMATION METHOD; USER INTERFACES ; CONVERSATIONAL SYSTEMS; COMMAND SYSTEMS; TELECOMMUNICATION; VIRTUAL REALITY

...IDENTIFIERS: FLYING; EXPOSURE THERAPY; VIRTUAL REALITY EXPOSURE; VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT; FEARED STIMULUS; ACROPHOBIA; HEAD MOUNTED DISPLAY; VIRTUAL AIRPLANE ; STEREO EARPHONES; AUDITORY CUES; VISUAL CUES; THERAPIST; TV MONITOR; Flugzeugtechnik; virtuelle Maschine; menschliches Verhalten
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